

Comment on the proposed conservation of the specific names of *Aphodius rufus* (Moll, 1782), *A. foetidus* (Herbst, 1783) and *Aegialia rufa* (Fabricius, 1792) (Insecta, Coleoptera)
(Case 2878; see BZN 51: 121–127)

Giovanni Dellacasa

C.P. 921, 16100 Geneva, Switzerland

I should like to comment on the problem of *Scarabaeus* (now *Aphodius*) *scybalarius* Fabricius, 1781.

Since Landin (1956) discovered that Fabricius's type of *Scarabaeus scybalarius* is in fact a blackish specimen of the taxon currently known as *Aphodius rufus* (Moll, 1782), there has been a nomenclatural problem. Landin, however, did not consult the Commission (para. 3 of the application). Silfverberg (1977) was the first author to address this problem and, with no regard for nomenclatural continuity, considered that the name *scybalarius* must be adopted in place of *rufus* Moll. At the same time he recognised that the specific name of *Scarabaeus* (now *Rhysothorax*) *rufus* Fabricius, 1792 was a junior primary homonym of *Scarabaeus* (now *Pachnoda* or *Dischista*) *rufus* De Geer, 1778 (para. 7 of the application) and proposed the new name *rufinus* for Fabricius's taxon.

In their application, Krell, Stebnicka & Holm have proposed the suppression of *scybalarius*, misapplied by most authors, and the adoption of the name *foetidus* Herbst, 1783 for the taxon, and the conservation of the names *rufus* Moll and *rufus* Fabricius. However, in my view these proposals are formally incorrect because of Silfverberg's previous (1977, 1979) actions. Silfverberg recognized that *scybalarius* had been misapplied by authors and strictly applied the Principle of Priority to *rufus* Moll and *rufus* Fabricius. Though these actions did not maintain stability in the nomenclature, Krell et al. are now addressing a problem that no longer exists.

In my view there are two courses that could be followed to solve the nomenclatural problem:

Either: (1) To set aside the lectotype of *Aphodius scybalarius* (Fabricius, 1781) designated by Landin (1956) and designate a neotype in the sense the name has been used by most authors (i.e. for the species correctly known as *foetidus* Herbst, 1783), and to conserve the names *rufus* Moll, 1782 and *rufus* Fabricius, 1792, notwithstanding their primary homonymy with *rufus* De Geer, 1778.

This is the more simple course which, if adopted, would avoid any changes in the nomenclature of these widely spread, common and well known taxa and would maintain the 150 year-old interpretation of the names.

Or: (2)(a) To suppress the name *scybalarius* Fabricius, 1781 and adopt for this species (in the sense used by most authors) the name *foetidus* Herbst, 1783;
(b) to adopt the name *Aphodius arcuatus* (Moll, 1785), the first available synonym of the junior homonym *A. rufus* (Moll, 1782);
(c) to adopt the name *Rhysothorax spissipes* (LeConte, 1878), the first available synonym of the junior homonym *Rhysothorax rufus* (Fabricius, 1792). In consequence the name *rufinus* Silfverberg, 1977 becomes an unnecessary replacement name.

This second procedure is much more complex than the first but is nomenclaturally more correct and, without any doubt, more logical than the proposals of Krell, Stebnicka & Holm.

Comment on the proposed conservation of the specific name of *Lithobius piceus*

L. Koch, 1862 (Chilopoda)

(Case 2919; see BZN 51: 133–134)

Alessandro Minelli

Dipartimento di Biologia, Università di Padova, Via Trieste 75, I-135121 Padova, Italy

I wish to express my full support for Dr E.H. Eason's application proposing the conservation of the specific name of the centipede *Lithobius piceus* L. Koch, 1862.

Comment on the proposed conservation of HEMIDACTYLIINI Hallowell, 1856

(Amphibia, Caudata)

(Case 2869; see BZN 50: 129–132; 51: 153–156, 264–265)

Hobart M. Smith

Department of EPO Biology, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado 80309-0334, U.S.A.

David B. Wake

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720, U.S.A.

We respond to Prof Dubois's comment (published in BZN 51: 264–265) on our application.

1. At the time that Dubois (1984) revived MYCETOGLOSSINI Bonaparte, 1850 to replace HEMIDACTYLIINI Hallowell, 1856 (which had been adopted by Wake, 1966, for the first time since its proposal), HEMIDACTYLIINI had been used (note the 'non-exhaustive' list in para. 4 of the application) in at least 10 works by nine authors, and by the time that our application was submitted those figures had increased to at least 16 and 15 respectively.

2. Article 23b of the current (1985) Code came into effect on 1 January 1973 and was therefore operating at the time that Dubois (1984) adopted MYCETOGLOSSINI. This Article states: 'The Principle of Priority is to be used to promote stability and is not intended to be used to upset a long-accepted name in its accustomed meaning through the introduction of an unused name that is its senior synonym'. Therefore, Bonaparte's name should not automatically have been adopted by Dubois and, accordingly, it would have been correct for authors to continue to use HEMIDACTYLIINI after Dubois pointed out the earlier family-group name, whilst referring the problem to the Commission.

3. We requested the suppression of MYCETOGLOSSINI in conformance with Article 79 and within the spirit of the current Code. The Code encourages nomenclatural stability by permitting the suppression (under the plenary powers) of long-unused names that threaten established, current usage. Admittedly Cope (1889), Dunn (1926) and Wake (1966) overlooked Bonaparte's name but this was not then known